

EIS001936

# Escalante Wilderness Project

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February 29, 2000

RECEIVED

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Ms. Wendy R. Dixon, EIS Project Manager  
M/S 010  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management  
Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office  
P.O. Box 30307  
North Las Vegas NV 89036-0307

Dear Ms. Dixon:

1 We are writing to support the No-Action Alternative in the Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level  
Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain.

2 We have many concerns about the proposed project. First, Yucca Mountain is sacred to  
the Paiute and Shoshone people, who do not want it desecrated with radioactive waste. DOE has  
not consulted with the sovereign governments of these Native Americans on a nation-to-nation  
basis about the proposed Yucca Mountain project, as required by law.

3 We are concerned that a March 1998 study by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
showed that the ground around Yucca Mountain could stretch over three feet in the next 1,000  
years. This movement could crush any canisters of waste buried there, exposing a wide area of  
the Southwest to deadly radiation. Earthquakes and volcanism in the area could also disturb the  
canisters.

4 We understand that reputable scientists have predicted that the canisters could be  
corroded by groundwater, corrosive minerals, or bacteria within Yucca Mountain. A Los Alamos  
scientist expressed concern that corroded canisters could go critical (start a nuclear chain  
reaction), blowing the top off of Yucca Mountain. Once this possibility was identified, DOE  
should have immediately cancelled the project.

5 The waste destined for the repository will remain hazardous to humans for 10,000 to  
250,000 years. All the evidence shows that Yucca Mountain is incapable of isolating the waste  
from the environment for that long.

6 We believe the safest thing to do with spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste  
is to store them above ground at the point of origin. The facilities that produce nuclear waste  
have the trained personnel and appropriate equipment to monitor it and re-package it if necessary  
to keep it isolated from the environment.

Sincerely,

Victoria Woodard Patrick Diehl

Victoria Woodard  
Patrick Diehl  
Escalante Wilderness Project